

To read Brazilian *Arquitetura Nova*: Flávio Império, Rodrigo Lefèvre and Sérgio Ferro architects

Para ler Arquitetura Nova Brasileira: arquitetos Flávio Império, Rodrigo Lefèvre e Sérgio Ferro

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The first studies examined the role of Grupo *Arquitetura Nova* in contemporary Brazilian architecture that was done almost 20 years ago. (Koury, 1999 [2003], Arantes, 2000 [2002]). The *arq.urb* journal, from the Graduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism at São Judas University, features an edition that seeks to broaden the debate on the multifaceted work of architects Flávio Império Rodrigo Lefèvre and Sérgio Ferro. These early studies admitted that the three architects' work in the 1960s was a co-production between them, as Sérgio Ferro repeatedly stated in his interviews.

This narrative has recently been reevaluated through studies that address the specificities of these architects' individual contributions in the path of Buzzar, 2001 [2019] and Guimarães (2006). Buzzar had clarified the role of Rodrigo Lefèvre in the company Hidroservice. Recently Koury (2019) has brought together and introduced Lefèvre's texts to a broader audience than the scholars of Grupo *Arquitetura Nova*.

Gorni (2004), Garcia (2012), and Quevedo (2019) have studied Flávio Império's multifaceted work bringing light to his contribution to architecture, scenography, painting, respectively. On the other hand, the study of Sérgio Ferro's career gained momentum from the collection of texts, organized and presented by Arantes (2006), which spread the author's thinking, previously dispersed in old issues of magazines with restricted circulation. The research on Ferro's career is addressed by Costa (2008), who analyzed his teaching performance, and Contier (2010), who presented his theoretical and historiographic contribution from his move to France in 1972.

This special issue aims to gather some unpublished contributions from this ongoing research in the country such as the articles of Guimarães, Quevedo, Garcia and

Contier in this special issue. But it also seeks the contributions of national authors recognized for their contribution to the historiography of Brazilian architecture, which in other ways have also accumulated reflections from Grupo *Arquitetura Nova*, such as Ruth Verde Zein, José Tavares Lira and João Marcos Lopes. Zein and Lira had respectively illuminated the importance of Rodrigo Lefèvre to the teaching of architecture and Sérgio Ferro's role in the history of architecture criticism in Brazil. Lopes, in turn, points out methodological elements for the study of Ferro's work.

The international interest in the work of Grupo *Arquitetura Nova* has been noticed in events, such as the Industries of Architecture seminar, held in Newcastle in 2014 (Thomas, Amhoff and Beech, 2016) or the exhibition, "Dreams seen up close," a room dedicated to Grupo *Arquitetura Nova* in the 2nd Biennale d'Architecture d'Orléans, in 2020. Katie Lloyd Thomas, one of the organizers of the seminar in New Castle, and Davide Sacconi, curator of the exhibition in Orléans, contribute to this special edition of the *New Brazilian Architecture*. Davide Sacconi presents Ferro's political praxis through architecture and offers us a theoretical-critical reading on the work of the group *Arquitetura Nova*.

Ferro produced a significant part of his work in France, where he moved and in 1972 and built a long career as a painter and teacher. Some of these works were originally written in French and only recently translated into Portuguese Ferro (2015 and 2016). The teaching experience at the Dessin / Chantier laboratory in Grenoble should also be considered, primarily through the work of his closest collaborators such as Chérif Kebbal, Philippe Potié, and Cyrille Simonnet, or Patrice Doat, at the Craterre laboratory. Indeed, Ferro left a significant legacy in France, which goes far

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número 29 | set - dez de 2020



beyond the didactic project for the Isle d'Abeau experimental site. Vincent Michel noted Ferro's contribution in presenting the French edition of *O Canteiro e o Desenho* (2005). But the Ferro's group followed different paths, even departing from the Brazilian's premises.

The contributions of João Marcos Lopes and Katie Lloyd Thomas, and Christopher Donaldson point to the expansion of studies on Sérgio Ferro's work in the United Kingdom. In this sense, an important initiative is a project for translating into English Sérgio Ferro's written work, carried out by a vast collaborative research network between Brazil and the United Kingdom. Marcos and Thomas had an essential role in it. In turn, Donaldson contributes with the text John Ruskin's *Shells*, whose developments in the interpretation of Sérgio Ferro's legacy in the tradition of English romanticism are explored in the presentation by Cláudio Amaral.

Sérgio Ferro's theoretical work has aroused great interest in the United Kingdom and the United States. Harvard Design Magazine translated the controversial article by Sérgio Ferro [1988] "Concrete as a weapon" in 2018. Also, the architectural projects of Rodrigo Lefèvre have been of ongoing interest to professor William Watson in the United States. He has been researching Lefèvre's work and contributes a text on Lefèvre's proposals for migrant housing along the periphery of São Paulo.

From the USA, Fernando Lara and Patricio del Real, who are recognized authors due to their contribution to the history of Latin American architecture, reinterpreted in this number, the meaning of the military dictatorship in contemporary architecture in Latin America. Although with very different methodological perspectives, the two texts that open this edition allow us to shed light on a central theme for both trends, the engaged and critical architecture such as Grupo Arquitetura nova, and that which attended the cycle of economic development associated with the Military State. Lara presents a manifest framing the relations between modernization and colonization and claiming architecture's political engagement today. Del Real reconstructs the plot of cultural and political ties between Latin America and the United States during this period by analyzing the Museum of Modern Art's architectural exhibition in New York. Both contribution are based on a transnational history and allows the reader to revisit this period of political and social history of Latin America through Architecture.

The set of texts gathered here demonstrates the vitality of the work of Grupo Arquitetura Nova, which continues to instigate contemporary reflections. Regardless of the

regional scope in which it was previously recorded by Yves Bruand (1971 [1981]), as an effect of the leadership of the architect João Batista Vilanova Artigas in São Paulo, or even expanding the interpretations and meanings of Sérgio Ferro's work in the political-cultural sphere as done by Bicca's pioneering work (1984).

If it is not possible to deny the formation of a qualified group of researchers in the cultural and academic environment that today is dedicated to the study of the work of Grupo Arquitetura Nova, we also cannot deny the universality of the issues raised by Sérgio Ferro, Flávio Império, and Rodrigo Lefèvre. What can be attested by the inclusion of the work of these architects in the historiography of Brazilian architecture produced in Brazil (Segawa, 1997, Bastos, 2003, Bastos and Zein, 2010) and internationally broadcasted (Andreoli & Forti, 2007, Anelli, 2008 and Williams, 2009).

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